

Please amend the above-identified application as follows:

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph on page 47 spanning lines 10-15 with the following amended paragraph:

In still another preferred embodiment, the rhodamine dyes of the invention are compounds according to structural formula (Ib) in which rhodamine-type parent xanthene ring Y is selected from the group consisting of (Y-1), (Y-2), (Y-3) and (Y-4), where $R^1, R^2, R^3, R^5, R^6, R^6', R^7, R^8, R^9, R^{10}, R^{11}, R^{12}, R^{13}, R^{14}, R^{15}, R^{16}, R^{17}, R^{18}, R^{19}, R^{20}$ and R^{21} are as previously defined, and either $[[R^{3'}]] \underline{R^3}$ or R^4 indicates the point of attachment of substituent L. When substituent L is attached to $[[R^{3'}]] \underline{R^3}$, R^4 is as previously defined. When substituent L is attached to R^4 , $[[R^{3'}]] \underline{R^3}$ is as previously defined.

Please replace the paragraph on page 53 spanning lines 5-9 with the following amended paragraph:

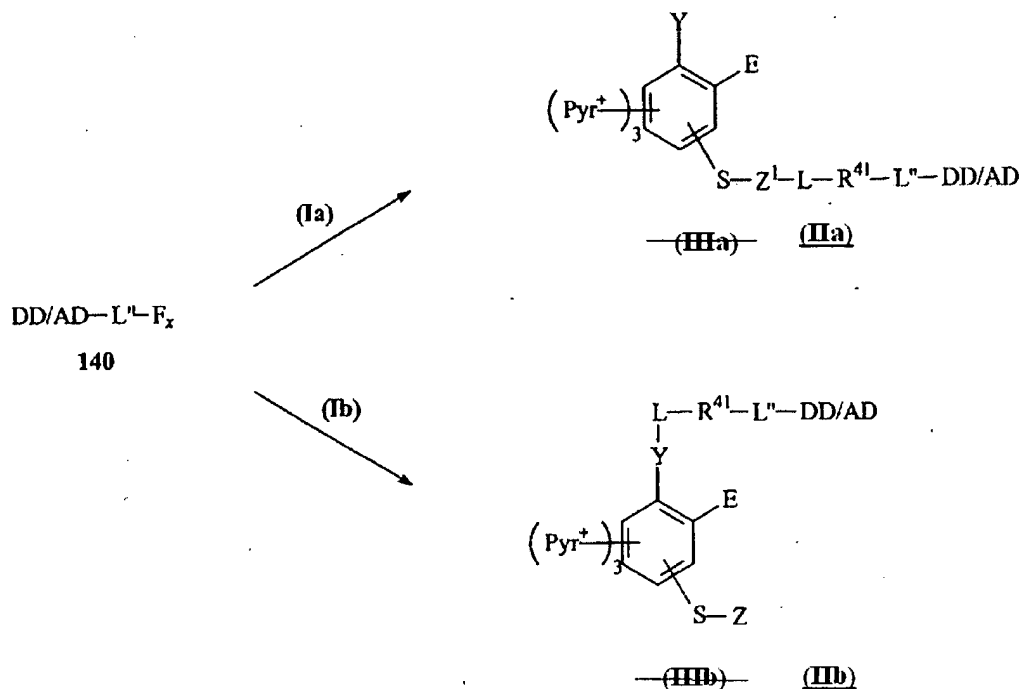
In yet another preferred embodiment, the rhodamine dyes of the invention are compounds according to structural formula (Ib) in which Y is selected from the group consisting of (Y-1), (Y-2), (Y-3), (Y-4), where substituent L is attached to $[[R^{3'}]] \underline{R^3}$, or one of the following group of compounds, where R^9 is as previously defined for structural formula (Y-1) and the dashed line at the nitrogen atom indicates the point of attachment of substituent L:

Please replace the paragraph on page 56 spanning lines 11-13 with the following amended paragraph:

Z is selected from the group consisting of (C₁-C₁₂) alkyl, (C₁-C₁₂) alkanyl, (C₅-C₁₀) aryl, phenyl, naphthyl, naphth-1-yl, naphth-2-yl, pyridyl and purinyl, where in structures (Y-1) through (Y-4) L is attached to $[[R^{3'}]] \underline{R^3}$.

Please replace the paragraph on page 67 between lines 6 and 9 with the following amended paragraph:

Scheme V



Please replace the paragraph on page 71 spanning lines 14-17 with the following amended paragraph:

Y is a compound according to structural formula (Y-1), (Y-2), (Y-3) or (Y-4), where L is attached at position $[[R^{3'}]] \underline{R^3}$, or is a compound according to structural formula (Y-20b), (Y-21b), (Y-22b), (Y-23b), (Y-24b), (Y-25b), (Y-31b), (Y-34b), (Y-35b), (Y-36b), (Y-39b), (Y-41b), (Y-42b), (Y-43b), or (Y-46b);